

A
CONFERENCE

Between *J. M.*

A Roman Catholick Gentleman,

And some

DIVINES

Of the

Church of ENGLAND,

About the meaning of the WORD

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

Address'd to his GRACE the Lord Arch-bishop of
Tuam, and the Reverend Doctor *Nary*, between
whom there is a Controversie now depending about
the Points in Dispute between the *Church* of Eng-
land, and the *Church* of *Rome*.

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Between J. M.

and Catholic Gentlemen

And

DIVINE

1606/789

Church of England

A short history of the Word

TRANSUBSTANTIATION

Addressed to his Grace the Lord Archbishop of
Trent, and the Reverend Doctor, between
whom there is a Controversy now depending about
the Points in Dispute in the Words of the
Lord, and the Church of Rome.

A
CONFERENCE
BETWEEN

A Roman Catholick Gentleman, and
some Divines of the Church of Eng-
land, about the meaning of the Word
Transubstantiation.

I Was agreeably surprized, on a late Con-
versation with some *Divines* of the Church
of *England*, to find their Sentiments and
mine very neighbourly, if not entirely
agreeing, in the belief of the *Eucharist*,
which the *Roman Catholicks* express by the
pompous Word *Transubstantiation*, the sound
of which Word has so much offended the
tender Ears of all Sectaries; As a Mistake of
Terms is, was, and always will be, the chief
Cause of Disputes, 'tis no wonder that a
Word importing so much *Abstruse Philosophy*,
shou'd foment and keep up religious Differen-
ces. *Abstruse* I call it, because no human
Mind is capable of forming an Idea of Sub-
stance abstracted from the Qualities of Exten-
sion, Figure, &c. or what the ingenious

Doctor Barclay more properly calls *Sensations*, we being Strangers to any other Existence; which Substance by the Doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, is changed in this great Mystery. This surely can't give Offence to Persons fond of their Senses, because there's nothing of Bread and Wine changed which ever was, is, or can be an Object of them. The Church of *Rome* allows that the Qualities of Bread and Wine, or, in short, every Thing of Bread and Wine that is an Object of the Senses, remains; and tho' the *Roman Catholics* do not call it Bread and Wine, yet as an Assemblage of these Qualities or Sensations is the only Idea, the human Mind can form of Bread and Wine, the Dispute, according to Custom, seems to be only about Terms. This plainly confutes that the celebrated Distinction on which Dissenters from the Church of *Rome* lay such Stress, viz. That they can believe Mysteries which are Above their Senses, as the Trinity, Incarnation, &c. But they can't believe any thing Contrary to their Senses, alluding to the *Roman Catholic* Belief of the Eucharist; whereas the Church of *Rome* believes nothing in this Mystery contrary to the Senses; Every thing of Bread and Wine remaining, which ever was, is, or can be an Object of them.



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The *Thing changed* called *Substance* or *Substratum*, cannot be comprehended, as has been said before, by the human Mind. Many ignorant Divines of the *Church of Rome* have indeed taken pains to prove the *fallibility* of the *Senses* for the support of *Transubstantiation*. *A dangerous Expedient!* tending to destroy the Authority of Miracles wrought in the Infancy of Christianity, of which the Senses were certainly Judges. This is so evident that 'tis needless to enumerate 'em. Tho' the Learned Jesuit *Becanus* compares the agreeable Miracle of changing *Water* into *Wine*, to this great *Mystery*; to which it has not the least Resemblance, the *Qualities*, *Accidents*, or *Sensations* of *Water* being changed into *Wine*. I can't quit this Subject without observing, that the *Council of Trent*, had great Regard for the *Senses* in its determining, that nothing is chang'd in this great *Mystery*, but the *Substance*, which never was an Object of *them*, and consequently cou'd never create an Idea in the human Mind; nor can I pass unobserv'd, the great fondness shewn by the *Parliament of England*, for this *Substance* or *Substratum*, which I term incomprehensible, because no human Mind can form an Idea of an Existence, abstracted from the *Qualities* of *Extension*, *Figure*, &c. as has been said before. The *Declaration*
which

which every Person must sign, previous to their having an Employment; asserts, that there is no Transubstantiation of the *Elements* of Bread and Wine, which must certainly mean of this incomprehensible *Substance*, because, shou'd it only declare that there is no Change of any thing in the Bread and Wine, which was an Object of the Senses, every *Roman Catholick* wou'd subscribe to such *Declaration*; is being the Doctrine of the *Church of Rome*, that every thing remains after Consecration, which was, is, or can be an Object of the Senses. For my Part, if the *Council of Trent* had not declar'd there was such an Existence, as Substance abstracted from the Qualities of Extension, Figure, &c. and if the *Legislature of England*, had not by this solemn *Declaration* asserted its Existence; I should never Philosophically think of a *Substance*, *Substratum*, or something distinct from the Qualities of Extension, Figure, &c. an assemblage of which, is the only Idea the human Mind can form of Bread and Wine, or any other Body. I don't take upon me to decide, whether a Person with safety of Conscience can swear or declare, that something exists, of which he can't possibly have an Idea. In swearing positively 'tis not only necessary the thing shou'd be true, but *so* to the Knowledge of the Person who swears.

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The learned Gentlemen of the Church of England, Asked me into what sort of Body I imagined this incomprehensible Substance of Bread and Wine was changed; I answered, that I apprehended by the Doctrine of the Church of Rome, it was changed into a Body of which we can have no Idea, viz. a *Glorified or Spiritual*, and not a *Gross, extended Body*, as some of the Disciples understood it, when they cryed out, *This is a hard Saying, who can hear it!*

To conceive this, I observe, the Apostle says there are two different Manners of *Being* proper to an human Body, according to its different States. It may be either *Mortal or Immortal; Corruptible or Incorruptible, Spiritual or Natural*. Thus St. Paul, discoursing of the manner in which our Body shall be at the Resurrection, says, that then *This Corruptible Body shall put on Incorruption, And This Mortal; Immortality; It is sown a Natural Body, and 'tis raised a Spiritual*. Now tho' it be not possible to imagine how an human Body, when it is in its *Corruptible Mortal Natural* manner of *Being*, i. e. in its extended gross manner, can be contained in the Compass of a *Waser*, yet when this same Body has put on its other, more perfect manner of *Being*, and is now become incorruptible and spiritual, there is not that Difficulty in
 appre-

apprehending it, because, as spiritual, it requires no Extension, or Greatness of Place. This solves many Difficulties relating to this Subject, as if the Wafer be broke, how this Spiritual Body may be in every Part. I confess I have no more Idea of a *Spiritual Body* than of a *Corporeal Spirit*, tho' I am inclined to believe that our Saviour assumed this extraordinary Manner of *Being*, both before and after his Resurrection, having been born without Injury to his Mother's Virginal Integrity, and pass'd thro' the Crowd often unperceived.

When I had finished this Discourse, one of the *Church of England Divines* sum'd up the whole in the following *Remarks*, viz.

We (says he) of the *Church of England* say, that *The Body and Blood of our Saviour is after a spiritual Manner in the Sacrament*; and *You* say, 'tis a *giorified spiritual Body*.

We say, the *Bread and Wine* remains, and *You* of the *Church of Rome* say, the *Qualities or Sensations only remain*; and as the Assemblage of those Qualities in the only Idea we can have of Bread and Wine, I see little *Difference* (says he) *except in Terms*, the Substance, which you say is changed, being incomprehensible, never having been an Object of the Senses.

F I N I S.

